



Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board (NSSAB)

Full Board Virtual Meeting

4:00 p.m. – September 23, 2020

Members Present: Frank Bonesteel (Chair), William DeWitt, Pennie Edmond, Charles Fullen, Dick Gardner (Vice-Chair), Anthony Graham, Tanya Henderson, Donald Neill, Steve Rosenbaum, Richard Stephans, Richard Twiddy, Dina Williamson-Erdag

Members Absent: Amina Anderson, Karen Eastman, Janice Six

Liaisons Present: Phil Klevorick (Clark County), Richard Arnold (Consolidated Group of Tribes and Organizations [CGTO]), Delon Winsor (Esmeralda County Commission), Scott Lewis and Patrick Lazenby (Nye County Emergency Management [NCEM]), John Klenke and Darrell Lacy (Nye County Nuclear Waste Repository Project Office [NWRPO]), Chris Andres (State of Nevada Division of Environmental Protection [NDEP])

Liaisons Absent: Jared Brackenbury (Lincoln County Commission), Leo Blundo (Nye County Commission),

Department of Energy (DOE): **Environmental Management (EM) Nevada Program:** Robert Boehlecke (Deputy Designated Federal Officer [DDFO]), Kevin Cabbie, Tiffany Gamero, John Myers, Bill Wilborn;
National Nuclear Security Administration/Nevada Field Office (NNSA/NFO): Darwin Morgan

Government Contractors: **Navarro:** Dona Merritt, Christy Morris, Patty Neese, Ari Rosenberg, Jesse Sleezer, and Barbara Ulmer;
Desert Research Institute (DRI): Susan Edwards and Maureen King

Public: Gail Alexander, Gregg Bronwen, Gary Elgort, Mark Hilton, Ronald Korner, Dan Peterson, Andrew Remus, Kelsey Shank (theEdge), and Favil West

Open Meeting/Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Frank Bonesteel welcomed everyone to the meeting. Following the Chair's opening remarks, Member Richard Stephans moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Written Public Comment Read into Record

There was no written public comment.

U.S. DOE Update (*Robert Boehlecke, DOE*)

DDFO Robert Boehlecke opened with a status of EM Nevada Program mission activities. Crews are currently performing fieldwork with the majority of other EM Federal and contractor staff remaining on telework. Limited Program-related travel has resumed, mainly for the Radioactive Waste Acceptance Program (RWAP). The Program continues to meet its commitments to stakeholders through virtual and/or in-person meetings, including the NSSAB, Low-Level Waste (LLW) Stakeholders Forum, NDEP, etc.

DDFO Boehlecke reminded the Board that the March 2020 Full Board Meeting was canceled due to the emerging public health challenge. As a result, the EM Nevada Program was not able to brief on the fiscal year (FY) 2022 Baseline Prioritization work plan item, and there was discussion to consider this evening. Due to time constraints and the unique circumstances involved, the EM Nevada Program budget was submitted and approved by EM Headquarters (HQ) shortly thereafter, rendering the Baseline Prioritization effectively moot in large part. The main feedback received following the July 2020 Full Board meeting was that it would be important to keep this evening's agenda concise and streamlined. DDFO Boehlecke continued that there is a packed agenda tonight, including the development of FY 2021 Work Plan, round robin development for the EM Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB) National Chairs Meeting, and the election of NSSAB officers. Additionally, because the budget cycle has passed, the EM Nevada Program simply does not have the authorizations in place to do anything of substance with the Board's feedback. Therefore, the EM Nevada Program is strongly recommending that the NSSAB forgoes this work plan item in order to save time in this evening's agenda. DDFO Boehlecke thanked the Board for its patience, and the Program looks forward to engaging in a prioritization of EM activities for FY 2023 in the upcoming fiscal year.

DDFO Boehlecke updated that progress continues for the transfer of long-term stewardship responsibility to DOE's Office of Legacy Management (LM) for 70 closed Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order sites on the Tonopah Test Range and Nevada Test and Training Range. Nearly all actions are on track to be completed by the transfer date of September 30, 2020, with all actions for LM to assume long-term surveillance and monitoring already complete. A successful joint Declaration of Readiness Review with EM, LM, and NNSA/NFO was held that included a review of over 100 actions with no issues or omissions identified.

DDFO Boehlecke concluded with upcoming presentations/meetings/conferences:

- Late October – host Under Secretary for Science Paul M. Dabbar (S-4)
- October 27 – host NSSAB Orientation (virtual)
- November 5 - host the quarterly LLW Stakeholders Forum (virtual)
- November 17-18 – participate in the DOE EM HQ Intergovernmental Meeting (virtual)

NNSA Update (*Darwin Morgan, NNSA/NFO*)

Mr. Darwin Morgan reported that the Administrator for the NNSA visited the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS) earlier this month. She has been on a round robin tour of NNSA sites over the past several months. She conducted an all-hands for all NNSS employees, attended a dedication for the completion of a security system at the NNSS, and toured the U1a Complex and was briefed on the current activities to update and enlarge the facility. The NNSA Administrator met with the leadership of the National Atomic Testing Museum and conducted a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the NNSS' Emergency Communications Network hub located in Las Vegas, Nevada. This network was used to support personnel in areas that have experienced hurricanes by providing equipment to Federal agencies that have had impacts to their communications. Mr. Morgan commented that the NNSA/NFO continues to conduct National Security mission work. Preparations are underway for a subcritical experiment in the first quarter of FY 2021. Three experiments have been conducted over the last two months at the Joint Actinide Shock Physics Experimental Research (JASPER) facility, two of these experiments used surrogate material and the other used actinide plutonium material. Despite the global pandemic, Mr. Morgan concluded that the NNSA/NFO is meeting its milestones to deliver the information needed by the national laboratories to ensure the security and reliability of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile.

Liaison Updates

Clark County (*Phil Klevorick*)

Liaison Phil Klevorick reported that all the meetings that he has participated in have been virtual. All county departments are working within their budget control and are anticipating notification of even greater budget cuts in the January/February 2021 timeframe. Liaison Klevorick will provide status updates of the impacts at future NSSAB meetings.

CGTO (*Richard Arnold*)

Liaison Richard Arnold stated that he participated in the RadWaste Summit this month. He updated on the Tribal Revegetation Project at the Area 5 Radioactive Waste Management Complex (RWMC). Liaison Arnold and a DRI representative continued to conduct monthly monitoring activities to evaluate the plant growth using a meter stick and have observed astonishing results with some plants measuring a foot taller than the stick. Due to COVID-19, the Tribal Revegetation Committee (TRC) has not been able to participate in the monitoring of the test plots, although tribal members have been receiving and will continue to receive regular progress reports via virtual meeting. The TRC is working with Portland State University and DRI to produce a progress report. Liaison Arnold noted that he has had interactions with the State and Tribal Governments Working Group and the National Transportation Stakeholders Forum (NTSF). In June 2021, Liaison Arnold announced that the NTSF will be held in Dallas, Texas.

Esmeralda County Commission (*Delon Winsor*)

Liaison Delon Winsor updated that it is anticipated that two mines in the county will open in 2021. He also noted that construction has begun on a truck stop in Goldfield, Nevada.

NCEM (*Patrick Lazenby*)

Liaison Patrick Lazenby reported that COVID-19 continues to be the focus of NCEM.

NWRPO (*John Klenke*)

Liaison John Klenke had nothing new to report.

NDEP (*Christine Andres*)

Liaison Christine Andres updated that her Bureau of Federal Facilities (BFF) employees have been approved to resume site visits and inspections at the NNSS that can be conducted safely outdoors with the proper protocols. NDEP has participated in-person meetings with the EM Nevada Program and NNSA/NFO mainly for the Y-12 waste issue to determine a mutual conclusion. Liaison Andres noted that she will be participating in the DOE EM HQ Intergovernmental Meeting virtually in November 2020. She concluded that she has hired a BFF employee and anticipates to hire another in the near future.

Engine Maintenance Assembly and Disassembly (EMAD) Path Forward (Work Plan #6)

(*Frank Bonesteel, Chair*)

The NSSAB received a briefing for this work plan item during the July 15, 2020 Full Board Meeting, and the Board approved a motion to table recommendation development until tonight. The Board was provided a video of the work plan briefing in advance to prepare for the meeting.

Chair Bonesteel conducted Board discussion and recommendation development that resulted in the following suggestions:

- Recommend that EMAD be demolished to slab as planned and the EM Nevada Program coordinate with the National Atomic Testing Museum to support a separate EMAD exhibit of its history and environmental restoration efforts
- Recommend that the locomotive engine be moved to Mercury, Nevada and placed near the visitor center or along the highway with an exhibit

Member Dina Williamson-Erdag made a motion to include the preceding items in a recommendation letter to the DOE. The motion was seconded and passed with a majority.

FY 2020 Work Plan Status Update (*DOE*)

The EM Nevada Program updated the NSSAB on the status of the six work plan items included in its work plan for FY 2020.

- **FY 2020 Work Plan Status – Industrial Sites** (*Tiffany Gamero, DOE*)
 - Provide a recommendation on the Department's planned end state for Test Cell C or how the plan could be improved
 - NSSAB Recommendation – November 2019
 - EM Nevada Program Response to NSSAB – February 2020
 - Update: no change, EM Nevada Program plans to move forward with end-state of demolition to slab of remaining facilities
 - Provide a recommendation on the Department's planned end state for EMAD or how the plan could be improved
 - NSSAB Recommendation – provided tonight
- **FY 2020 Work Plan Status – UGTA** (*John Myers, DOE*)
 - Provide a recommendation if the NSSAB supports the Yucca Flat/Climax Mine long-term monitoring network and recommend how it could be enhanced
 - NSSAB Recommendation – November 2019
 - EM Nevada Program Response to NSSAB – February 2020

- Update: preserved field, analytical, and correspondence records, developed data packages, and included periodic technology review in the Closure Report
- **FY 2020 Work Plan Status – Waste Management** (*Kevin Cabble, DOE*)
 - Provide a recommendation on the potential waste verification strategies identified and/or how these strategies may be implemented
 - NSSAB Recommendation – July 2020
 - EM Nevada Program Response to NSSAB – September 2020
- **FY 2020 Work Plan Status – Other** (*Rob Boehlecke, DOE*)
 - FY 2022 Prioritization – removed from work plan due to cancellation of March 18, 2020 NSSAB Full Board meeting (COVID-19)
 - NSSAB Long-Term Strategy – moved to FY 2021 work plan

FY 2021 Work Plan Development

DOE FY 2021 Proposed NSSAB Work Plan Tasks:

The EM Nevada Program proposed the following six work plan items related to EM activities planned for FY 2021 for the NSSAB's consideration. EM Nevada Program staff explained and answered Board questions for each of the proposed work plan items and the recommendation associated with each task.

1. From a community perspective, the NSSAB will provide a recommendation suggesting a path forward regarding the re-vegetative cover at Corrective Action Unit 111.
2. From a community perspective, the NSSAB will provide a recommendation on what types of representation should be on the External Peer Review panel for Pahute Mesa.
3. From a community perspective, the NSSAB will provide a recommendation ranking the planned activities for FY 2023.
4. From a community perspective, the NSSAB will develop a recommendation for how the NSSAB envisions its future role as the EM Nevada Program mission transitions to completion. This includes recommendations on the frequency of meetings, number of members, and overall community expectations.
5. From a community perspective, the NSSAB will provide a recommendation on the nature, presentation, and functionality of an interactive public information website.
6. From a community perspective, the NSSAB will provide a recommendation on obligations regarding the nature, frequency, and requirements of stakeholder/public notifications related to sampling activities and for ways the communication plan for Pahute Mesa groundwater sampling results could be enhanced.

Other NSSAB Task Input

Member Richard Twiddy started discussion regarding data available on EM activities and noted that there may be a simpler way for the public to access the information. Member Tanya Henderson added that the EM Nevada Program could partner with communities, such as, Indian Springs, to have a museum that is closer to the NNSS. DDFO Boehlecke remarked that establishing a new museum would be outside of EM's purview, although if there was anything related to this topic that would fall into EM's scope could be considered. Liaison Andres suggested that the work plan could focus on the preservation of institutional knowledge of the EM

Mission in Nevada and its history. She has been resolute that reasons for decisions that are made for EM activities are documented as a legacy for those who come behind us. Member William DeWitt advocated for interviewing EM employees and recording their personal insights that could be made available to the public. Member Anthony Graham added that University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) partnered with DOE under a grant in 2010/2011 to conduct and document oral histories of NNSS workers, and UNLV would be interested in participating in similar future projects.

After all Board discussion regarding potential work plan items was completed, the following work plan item was proposed by the NSSAB:

1. From a community perspective, the NSSAB will provide a recommendation on ways to preserve the institutional knowledge of activities completed by the EM Mission in Nevada and how that information can be more readily accessible to the public.

After further Board dialogue, Member Williamson-Erdag moved to approve the proposed FY 2021 work plan including the preceding seven work plan tasks and submit to DOE for its consideration. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

FY 2021 Meetings and Locations

Approval of Proposed Schedule

A proposed schedule was provided based on the timing of briefings and due dates for recommendations included in the FY 2021 Work Plan.

The Full Board meeting schedule for FY 2021 as follows:

- Wednesday, November 18, 2020 – Virtual
- Wednesday, January 20, 2021 – Amargosa Valley, Nevada starting at 4 p.m.
- Wednesday, February 17, 2021 – Las Vegas, Nevada starting at 4 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 19, 2021 – Beatty, Nevada starting at 4 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 21, 2021 – Las Vegas, Nevada starting at 4 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 22, 2021 – Las Vegas, Nevada starting at 4 p.m.

Other NSSAB Business (*Frank Bonesteel, Chair*)

On October 19-20, 2020, Chair Bonesteel and Vice-Chair Gardner will be representing the NSSAB during the EM SSAB National Chairs Meeting at the “virtual head table”. During this virtual meeting, there will be an opportunity for Chair Bonesteel to present a round robin to EM HQ Senior Management that highlights key topics of importance to the NSSAB. NSSAB members and liaisons are encouraged to observe the meeting that is scheduled from 9 a.m. – noon PT each day. The NSSAB Office will provide the link closer to the date of the meeting.

Chair Bonesteel initiated discussion on Nevada’s round robin slide from the following topics suggested by members:

Topic 1, Hot Topic

- Successful conduct of virtual meetings with more than expected turnout
- Historical preservation
- Discussion of differences on EM SSAB decision-making and Board make-up

Topic 2, Cross-cutting to other Sites

- Transportation of waste to Area 5 RWMC and Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) as well as commercial sites. Environmental statements are vague. What is the planning capacities, routes, etc.?

Topic 3, Potential Goals for FY 2021

- Initiate review of plans for the present plans for the Completion of NNSS Environmental Cleanup. (Seek presentations that would include topics such as overview; current commitment; what defines completion; what functions transition and where; personnel matters; financial implications/budget; cleanup costs summaries; etc.)
- Seek more diversity among Board Members based on work experience, type education, race, sex, and residence in Southern Nevada

Vice-Chair Gardner made a motion to focus on 'Historical preservation' and 'Discussion of differences on EM SSAB decision-making and Board make-up' under **Topic 1, Hot Topic**, and 'Transportation of waste to Area 5 RWMC and WIPP as well as commercial sites. Environmental statements are vague. What is the planning capacities, routes, etc.?' under **Topic 2, Cross-cutting to other Sites**. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Chair Bonesteel will enlist members that proposed these topics to assist with the development of the narrative for the round robin. A slide with the approved topics will be submitted by the NSSAB Office to the EM SSAB by the October 5, 2020 deadline.

DDFO Boehlecke recognized and thanked outgoing members Richard Twiddy, Amina Anderson, Pennie Edmond, Don Neill, and Steve Rosenbaum for their service to the NSSAB.

Member Williamson-Erdag reported on the RadWaste Summit (www.radwastesummit.com) that she and Chair Bonesteel attended virtually on September 9-11, 2020. She shared that she found the presentations very interesting and eye-opening for her in regard to the complicated waste issues that other DOE sites are facing. She encouraged members to attend in the future and concluded that the best presentation was *Legacy Cleanup Activities at the NNSS*.

Vice-Chair Gardner reported on the EM Cleanup Workshop that he and Chair Bonesteel attended virtually on September 16, 2020. He noted that this is the first time that he attended this workshop. During the welcome, it was announced that 750 attendees were expected to participate throughout the day. Representative Chuck Fleischmann from Tennessee presented first on the *Legislative Challenges and Opportunities for the EM Program*. The next session, *Highlighting EM Success from Across the Complex*, was a panel discussion with representatives from Savannah River, Oak Ridge, and Hanford sites. Ike White, EM-1, presented on *Ensuring Continued EM Momentum* that included EM accomplishments from the past year. The last sessions were an *EM Acquisition Update*, a *Panel Discussion on EM Hot Topics*, and *The Path Forward for EM's Strategic Vision*. The Mayor of Idaho Falls, Idaho and DOE's Under Secretary for Science Paul Dabbar closed the workshop with *Setting the Stage for Future Accomplishments*. The workshop in its entirety available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1_u9LbMSIM

FY 2021 Chair/Vice-Chair Election

Vice-Chair Dick Gardner expressed interest in serving as Vice-Chair and Chair Bonesteel expressed interest in serving as Chair for FY 2021. Member Stephans moved to approve that Dick Gardner serve as Vice-Chair and Frank Bonesteel serve as Chair of the NSSAB for FY 2021.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The Board thanked Chair Bonesteel and Vice-Chair Gardner for their continued leadership.

Meeting Wrap-Up and Adjournment

Upcoming calendar of events:

- EM SSAB National Chairs Meeting – October 19-20, 2020, 9 am. – noon – Virtual
- **DATE MOVED:** NSSAB Orientation – October 27, 2020 - Virtual
- **POSTPONED:** NSSAB Annual Work Plan Tour at the NNSS
- LLW Stakeholders Forum Meeting (invite only) – November 5, 2020 – Virtual
- NSSAB Intergovernmental Liaisons meeting – November 18, 2020 at 3 p.m. – Virtual
- NSSAB Full Board meeting – November 18, 2020 at 4 p.m. – Virtual

Any questions on the calendar of events, please contact the NSSAB Office at 702-523-0894.

Vice-Chair Gardner made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.